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GENERAL PROCEDURAL POLICIES

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CENTER FOR VETERINARY MEDICINE  
GUIDANCE ON MEDIA INQUIRIES

The Center for Veterinary Medicine has developed the following guidance document to facilitate handling media inquiries. By following this guidance, CVM employees will help the Center present consistent statements to the press and public, track news stories as they develop, and anticipate when stories will be published or broadcast.

Mr. Jon Scheid (HFV-12) and Ms. Linda Grassie (HFV-12) are CVM's media liaisons for **“major media”** inquiries, and they coordinate CVM's responses to inquiries from all **“non-major media.”** (See below for definitions of “major media” and “non-major media”.) Mr. Scheid and Ms. Grassie serve as backups in the absence of the other. Mr. Scheid may be reached at 301-827-3797. Ms. Grassie may be reached at 301-827-3796.

**Definitions of Major Media and Non-Major Media**

**“Major media”** include newspapers in major cities and those with a national audience such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Boston Globe*. Also included are national magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Ladies Home Journal*, etc. In addition, news wire services such as the Associated Press (AP), Bloomberg, Reuters, and United Press International (UPI) are classified as major media. Finally, all radio and television stations, national or local, are considered to be major media.

**“Non-major media”** include small town newspapers, the trade press, and newsletters and magazines issued by professional societies and trade groups. Thus, routine inquiries from *Feedstuffs*, *Food Chemical News*, *Animal Pharm*, and the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* are all considered to be non-major media.

**Inquiries from Major Media**

FDA's Office of Public Affairs (OPA) coordinates all inquiries from major media. **Should CVM employees receive a call directly from major media**, the reporter should be referred to CVM's contacts in OPA, listed below. Mr. Jon Scheid also should be notified of the inquiry. The

**OPA contact** for CVM is:

**Rae Jones**

**301-827-6246**

**Backup for Ms. Jones -- Kimberly Rawlings**

**301-436-2288**

When OPA receives CVM-related calls directly from major media, OPA will contact Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie for background information and to schedule any necessary interviews.

**Should CVM employees be contacted directly by OPA**, the employee can feel free, but is not obligated, to answer questions that he or she feels comfortable answering, or refer OPA to Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie. In addition, the employee should prepare a **brief memo** documenting the conversation with OPA and forward a copy by E-mail to their supervisor, Mr. Scheid, and Ms. Grassie.

### **Inquiries from Non-Major Media**

Inquiries from non-major media are coordinated by Ms. Grassie and **also may be handled directly by CVM subject matter experts** who feel comfortable responding to such questions. Should experts have doubts about responding to certain questions from reporters, or have concerns about particular issues being raised, they should consult Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie. During interviews, employees should focus on scientific and regulatory issues and remember that they are speaking for FDA.

**CVM employees** who handle direct inquiries from non-major media should document the contact with a **brief memo** and forward the memo by E-mail to their supervisor, Ms. Grassie, and Mr. Scheid. The memo should be completed within **one business day** following the media contact and should list any documents released. Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie will distribute copies of these memos to Senior Staff.

### **Anticipating Media Interest**

CVM also needs to anticipate issues that may be of interest to the media and to be prepared by developing informative background materials. When appropriate, FDA will issue **TALK PAPERS** and press releases, and CVM will issue **CVM UPDATES**, and other materials to respond to inquiries from the media. These materials provide FDA an opportunity to present

important public health messages, announce important FDA initiatives, and provide information about new products of interest to the consumer.

Efforts to anticipate issues of interest to the media should be coordinated through Mr. Scheid. CVM staffers should **consider the following questions** when they review premarket submissions to determine whether a new animal drug or food additive might attract the interest of the major news media or be of special interest to the consumer:

- Is this a first-of-a-kind product?
- Does it have life-saving potential?
- Does it have a significant impact on human health?
- Has it had expedited review?
- Is this product unique or particularly interesting to the public or reporters?
- Does the product have the potential to be controversial?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, staff members should contact either Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie who will discuss the matter with them.

Also, staffers should inform Mr. Scheid of pending approvals/clearances that have the potential to be of interest to the media or consumers as soon as possible in advance. This will enable Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie to coordinate with OPA to prepare and clear press releases. If CVM employees are aware of any other event that has the potential to be controversial, they should contact Mr. Scheid or Ms. Grassie as soon as possible.